

1989 DOWNTOWN INITIATIVE STUDY GROUP

This group was convened in early 1989 in conjunction with a community-based strategic planning effort known as Star Venture to define a future vision for downtown following the determination by two different national retail developers (Taubman, BCED of Canada) that a proposed 6-block retail mall project was not financially feasible.

With downtown's future as a major retail center no longer an option, the Downtown Initiative Study Group proposed a mixed-use synergic vision for downtown which has guided its development over the past 15 years. This vision includes:

- **Downtown as a business, government and financial center**
- **Downtown as a residential center**
- **Downtown as a center for tourists and conventions**
- **Downtown as a location for unique specialty retail**
- **Downtown as accessible, fun and friendly**

In addition to proposing over 40 short and longer term strategies to facilitate this mixed-use vision, the Downtown Initiative Study Group identified a dozen imperative strategies which included:

1. **Creation of Management BID's to provide stable, ongoing funding for DLA**
2. **Construction of additional on and off-street parking to support conversion of former department store properties to office/residential as well as arts and entertainment attractions, such as the Lied Center**
3. **Increase downtown festivals and events to enhance downtown as the "community center"**
4. **Maintain downtown theatre policy to ensure downtown's continued role as an arts and entertainment center**
5. **Expenditure of \$12 million in G.O. Bonds approved by Lincoln voters in 1985 to support mixed used vision**

The recommendations of the Downtown Initiative Study Group were unanimously adopted by the Lincoln City Council and incorporated into the Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan in June, 1989. This plan paved the way for downtown's successful transition from a retail center to the mixed-use center we know today.